

April 2014



Coos-Carroll County FSA Updates

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Coos-Carroll County FSA Office

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County Committee:
Julie Hussey - Chair
Bruce Savage - Vice-Chair
Joyce Brady - Member
Wayne Cheney - Member
Richard Fortin - Member

Next County Committee Meeting: June 12, 2014,
11:00 AM

USDA's Farm Service Agency Officially Announces Sign-Up Date for Disaster Assistance Programs

Sign-up Begins April 15 for Livestock, Honeybee, Farm-Raised Fish Programs

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator Juan M. Garcia announced that farmers can sign-up, beginning Tuesday, April 15, 2014 for disaster assistance programs, reestablished and strengthened by the 2014 Farm Bill. The programs below are retroactive to cover eligible losses back to Oct. 1, 2011.

Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides compensation to eligible livestock producers that have suffered livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather and attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law.

Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) provides compensation to eligible livestock producers that have suffered grazing losses due to drought or fire.

Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish that have losses due to disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, such as wildfires.

Farm Loan Office:

The Concord Center
10 Ferry St. Suite 212, Box 212
Concord, NH 03301
Phone (603)-223-6003
Fax (603)-223-6030

Tree Assistance Program (TAP) provides financial assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines damaged by natural disasters.

Producers are encouraged to contact their county office ahead of time to schedule an appointment.

NH Acting Farm Loan**Manager:**

Brian Kuper
brian.kuper@vt.usda.gov

For more information, producers can view the [2014 Farm Bill Fact Sheet](#), check out the LIP, LFP, ELAP and TAP [fact sheets](#) online or visit any USDA Service Center.

Farm Loan Officers:

Lorna Wakefield
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USDA Announces the Extension of the Milk Income Loss Contract Program for 2014

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) recently announced the extension of the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) program which protects dairy farmers against income loss through Sept. 1, 2014, or until a new Margin Protection Program for dairy producers (MPP) is operational.

Contracts for eligible producers enrolled in MILC on or before Sept. 30, 2013, are automatically extended until the termination date of the MILC program. Dairy operations with approved MILC contracts will continue to receive monthly payments if a payment rate is in effect.

MILC compensates enrolled dairy producers when the Boston Class I milk price falls below \$16.94 per hundredweight (cwt), after adjustment for the cost of dairy feed rations. MILC payments are calculated each month using the latest milk price and feed cost, just as in the 2008 Farm Bill. The payment rate for October 2013 through January 2014 marketings is zero. Payment rates during the months after January 2014 until the termination of the MILC program will be determined as the appropriate data becomes available.

Producers who want to select a different production start month must visit their local FSA office between April 14, 2014, and May 30, 2014.

FSA will provide producers with information on program requirements, updates and sign-ups as the information becomes available.

Dairy Indemnity Payment Program

The 2014 Farm Bill authorized the extension of the Dairy Indemnity Payment Program (DIPP) through September 30, 2018. DIPP provides payments to dairy producers and manufacturers of dairy products when they are directed to remove their raw milk or products from the market because of contamination.

USDA Encourages Early Registration for FSA Programs

USDA recommends that farmers and ranchers register in advance for FSA programs in order to improve the sign-up process and expedite implementation of programs. Producers are encouraged to report farm records and business structure changes to a [local FSA Service Center](#) before April 15, 2014.

Examples of updates or changes to report include:

- New producers or producers who have not reported farm records to FSA.
- Producers who have recently bought, sold or rented land. Those producers need to ensure that changes have been reported and properly recorded by local FSA county office personnel. Reports of purchased or sold property should include a copy of the land deed, and if land has been leased, then documentation should be provided that indicates the producer had/has control of the acreage.
- Producers that have changed business structures (e.g. formed a partnership or LLC) need to ensure that these relationships and shares are properly recorded with FSA. Even family farms that have records on file may want to ensure that this is recorded accurately as it may impact payment limits.

Farm records can be updated during business hours at FSA Service Centers that administer the county where the farm or ranch is located. Producers can contact their local FSA Service Center in advance to find out what paperwork they may need. In addition, bank account information should be supplied or updated if necessary to ensure that producers receive payments as quickly as possible through direct deposit.

For further information about our disaster programs and USDA's Farm Bill implementation plan, visit FSA's [2014 Farm Bill Web page](#). FSA Service Center locations can be found on the [FSA website](#).

New Farm Bill Offers Increased Opportunities for Producers

The 2014 Farm Bill offers increased opportunities for producers including farm loan program modifications that create flexibility for new and existing farmers. A fact sheet outlining modifications to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) Farm Loan Programs is available [here](#).

The Farm Bill expands lending opportunities for thousands of farmers and ranchers to begin and continue operations, including greater flexibility in determining eligibility, raising loan limits, and emphasizing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers.

Changes that will take effect immediately include:

- Elimination of loan term limits for guaranteed operating loans.
- Modification of the definition of beginning farmer, using the average farm size for the county as a qualifier instead of the median farm size.
- Modification of the Joint Financing Direct Farm Ownership Interest Rate to 2 percent less than regular Direct Farm Ownership rate, with a floor of 2.5 percent. Previously, the rate was established at 5 percent.
- Increase of the maximum loan amount for Direct Farm Ownership down payments from \$225,000 to \$300,000.
- Elimination of rural residency requirement for Youth Loans, allowing urban youth to benefit.
- Debt forgiveness on Youth Loans, which will not prevent borrowers from obtaining additional loans from the federal government.
- Increase of the guarantee amount on Conservation Loans from 75 to 80 percent and 90 percent for socially disadvantaged borrowers and beginning farmers.
- Microloans will not count toward loan term limits for veterans and beginning farmers.

Additional modifications must be implemented through the rulemaking processes. Visit the [FSA Farm Bill website](#) for detailed information and updates to farm loan programs.

Attention Farm Loan Borrowers

There is a new state statute requiring the name of on your photo identification (e.g., driver's license) match with the name used to file a Uniform Commercial Code (UCC). This UCC is put in place when you request a loan from FSA and renewed every 5 years. The UCC is a blanket lien taken against your chattels, equipment, etc. that you may have pledged for security.

The NH FSA Farm Loan Office is requesting that all borrowers send a copy of your photo identification to their office in Concord. Please mail a copy to: USDA/FSA, 10 Ferry St., Concord, NH 03301.

If it is more convenient, you may stop by your local Farm Service Agency County Office. County Office Staff can copy your license and send directly to the Concord Office for you. You could also either fax a copy of your license to: 603-223-6030 OR scan and email a copy of your license to sandra.carter@nh.usda.gov

USDA's Farm Service Agency Offers Farm Bill Website and Online Overview of Farm Bill Programs

The Agricultural Act of 2014 (the Act), also known as the 2014 Farm Bill, was signed by President Obama on Feb. 7, 2014. The Act repeals certain programs, continues some programs with modifications, and authorizes several new programs administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA). Most of these programs are authorized and funded through 2018.

For the latest on 2014 Farm Bill programs administered by FSA, please visit our Farm Bill website at www.fsa.usda.gov/farmbill and for an FSA program overview please read, download and/or print our recently posted FSA Farm Bill Fact Sheet titled, [What's in the 2014 Farm Bill for Farm Service Agency Customers?](#)

For more information on FSA, please contact your local USDA Service Center or visit us online at www.fsa.usda.gov.

USDA Enhances Farm Storage Facility Loan Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the expansion of the Farm Storage and Facility Loan program, which provides low-interest financing to producers. The enhanced program includes 22 new categories of eligible equipment for fruit and vegetable producers.

Producers with small and mid-sized operations, and specialty crop fruit and vegetable growers, now have access to needed capital for a variety of supplies including sorting bins, wash stations and other food safety-related equipment. A new more flexible alternative is also provided for determining storage needs for fruit and vegetable producers, and waivers are available on a case-by-case basis for disaster assistance or insurance coverage if available products are not relevant or feasible for a particular producer.

Additionally, Farm Storage and Facility Loans security requirements have been eased for loans between \$50,000 and \$100,000. Previously, all loans in excess of \$50,000 required a promissory note and additional security, such as a lien on real estate. Now loans up to \$100,000 can be secured by only a promissory note.

The low-interest funds can be used to build or upgrade permanent facilities to store commodities. Eligible commodities include grains, oilseeds, peanuts, pulse crops, hay, honey, renewable biomass commodities, fruits and vegetables. Qualified facilities include grain bins, hay barns and cold storage facilities for fruits and vegetables.

Contact your local FSA office or visit www.fsa.usda.gov for more about FSA programs and loans, including the Farm Storage Facility Loan Program.

Interest Rates

Selected Interest Rates for April 2014

Farm Operating Loans - Direct including Microloans 2.00
Farm Ownership Loans - Direct 4.00%
Farm Ownership Loans - Direct, Joint Financing 2.50%
Farm Ownership Loans - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher 1.50 %
Emergency Loans 3.00%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 Years) 2.125%
Conversation Loan 4.00%

Dates to Remember

April 14 - May 30 - MILC Producers may select a different start Month
April 15 - Disaster Assistance Programs Sign-up begins
May 26 - Memorial Day Holiday: Office Closed
June 12 - County Committee Meeting 11:00 AM

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).